

Statement:

December 20, 2018

EPA Acts on Oregon's Clean Water Act Impaired Waters List

State Commits to Process Improvements for Future Listings

On December 20, EPA Region 10 completed its review and acted on the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality's 2012 Clean Water Act Section 303(d), or Impaired Water Bodies, List.

EPA partially approved and partially disapproved Oregon's 2012 submittal. This action includes changing the category of 714 stream segments affected by ongoing litigation over temperature water quality standards. The action also identifies 285 waterbodies not fully analyzed in Oregon's submittal.

As part of the approval, EPA also affirmed Oregon's decision not to list marine waters for aquatic life impairments, primarily because no direct impacts to marine life have been demonstrated from corrosive waters within Oregon's territorial limits.

Under the Clean Water Act, waters on the Section 303(d) list require a Total Maximum Daily Load, which is the planning tool for restoring water quality.

States are required to produce Section 303(d), or Impaired Waters List every two years. Oregon is currently in the process of producing a combined 2014, 2016 and 2018 list. Oregon has also committed to process improvements including a statewide call for data when developing its list, modernization of data infrastructure, and a clear and transparent water body assessment method.

BACKGROUND

On November 5, 2014, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality submitted Oregon's 2012 Section 303(d) list of water quality limited segments still requiring a Total Maximum Daily Load to the EPA.

EPA's list review determined that ODEQ did not assemble and evaluate all existing and readily available data and information for water bodies of the state when developing its 2012 list as required. Specifically, ODEQ did not evaluate readily available data and information for pollutants such as: alkalinity; ammonia; aquatic weeds; bacteria; bio-criteria; chloride; chlorine; chlorophyll; dissolved oxygen (outside the Willamette and Umatilla Basins); marine waters; metals; nitrates; pH; phosphorus; temperature; tissue of fish and softshell clams; total dissolved gas; and toxics outside the Willamette and Umatilla Basins.

For more about EPA's review of Oregon's list, added listings and public comments received:
please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/tmdl/partial-approval-and-partial-disapproval-oregon-2012-303d-list>